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WITH OTHER EDITORIALS

Communists Join Birch Society

Robert Welch, founder and leader of the right-wing John Birch Society, for some time has been saying that a vast communist conspiracy permeates every area of American life with varying degrees of control or influence. Give him credit for consistency: now he is saying that there may be communists in his own organization.

Speaking to 1,800 college students attending a meeting sponsored by the Boston College chapter of the Young Americans for Freedom, Welch declared that some communists have infiltrated his organization but have failed to divide it into factions or divert its purpose by internal disputes.

We do not know whether Mr. Welch is correct and we doubt that he knows. It would be gross oversight on their part if communists passed up the opportunity to wriggle their way into an organization so ideally structured for their purposes. It is much more likely that Robert Welch sees communists in

the Birch Society because his delusions of persecution demand an ever-contracting circle of trustworthy people.

An increasing suspicion which eventually excludes everyone but the principal himself is characteristic of the persecution complex. A mind which condemns as communists or duped of communists Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower, the late Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, former director of the C.I.A. Allen Dulles, Chief Justice Earl Warren, Dr. Milton Eisenhower and many others; which distrusts the Christian clergy (both Protestant and Catholic); which sows distrust of respectable American institutions -- such a mind must eventually turn its suspicion upon those who are closest to it.

The fact is that Mr. Welch trusts no one but Mr. Welch -- a condition wise men will consider sufficient reason for distrusting him. -- *Christian Century*

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